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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
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AGRICULTURE AND NATIONAL DEFENSE

PRIORITY CHANGE STILL IN THE OFFING: Agriculture's implement needs under the defense priorities program are governed by the Farm Machinery and Equipment Plan. This plan involves two preference rating orders. One order assigns a defense rating -- A-10 -- to the materials necessary for the production of parts for repair and maintenance of existing farm equipment. The other assigns the highest civilian rating -- B-1 -- to the materials needed for the production of new farm equipment. The repair parts order is good until February 14, 1942, but the order covering new farm equipment expires October 31. OADR officials now working to obtain specific allocations of raw materials for farm machinery and equipment. The current B-1 rating is of little value as so many B-1's have been issued there are not enough metals and other materials to go around.

THE SUBSTITUTES ARE COMING: Some farm equipment manufacturers, hard pushed for the metals they normally use, are already out with good and acceptable substitutes. Poultry equipment manufacturers, particularly, have shifted from strategic materials, such as aluminum, galvanized sheets and certain kinds of steel, to plastics, wood, black painted steel and other substitutes. Full cooperation of farmers in accepting substitutes will be necessary if this switch-over program is to be fully successful. So far no kicks heard here on the substitutes that are out.

FARM LABOR SHORTAGE GETTING WORSE: During 1941 there has been a steadily decreasing supply of workers available for agricultural employment. This decrease has been felt most in dairying, poultry raising, and in occupations requiring ability to operate and repair machinery. The number of workers seeking the less skilled jobs in seasonal-crop operations has also been smaller than in past years. In spite of these difficulties, there have been no widespread losses of crops due to labor shortages. However, the number of workers engaged in agricultural employment is steadily decreasing, while employment in industry is continuing to increase. Agriculture, therefore, may expect a further tightening in the farm labor market, particularly in those occupations requiring considerable skill.

FOOD-FOR-FREEDOM: Oxford University Press is going to include a pamphlet signed by Secretary Wickard in its current "America in a World at War" series. Titled "Food for Freedom," the pamphlet will outline agriculture's part in National Defense, plug food production goals for 1942, and picture the stake farmers have in winning the war against Hitler. Should be off the press in 30 to 60 days.

U. S. D. A. OFFICIALS RETURN FROM ENGLAND: At Kansas City meeting October 9, Paul H. Appleby, Under Secretary of Agriculture and R. M. Evans, AAA Administrator, recently returned from England, comment on British food situation and Farm Defense Program efforts: Said Under Secretary Appleby: "If we fail in the job that we have agreed to take on -- supplying them with the foods which the United States alone can best supply -- we'll not only be endangering our own future and the future of democracy, we'll be letting down one of the most courageous peoples the world has ever seen, -- food has to be kept moving across the water --

and it is a matter of only a few days from the time it docks until it is on the tables of the people who will eat it." Administrator Evans stated, "We found that Great Britain must have American food to win. We found that our food has potentialities that go far beyond military victory, to the peace table.... Food is the hope of these hungry people. That is why food is going to play such a very important part when we get down to working out the peace. It will be food America is producing now and will produce in the next few years. That food can be -- and it must be -- a tremendous power for building the kind of world free men can live in. Lots of important people in England recognize that this is something more than a war.... It has to mean freedom from hunger and economic tyranny as well."

FARMERS URGED TO REPAIR FARM MACHINERY: A special plea will be made to farmers when they sign farm plans in the Food for Freedom campaign to repair their farm machinery this fall and winter in order to avoid delays next year and to release needed metals for other phases of the defense program. Adequate metals are assured for repair parts, but the amount of new farm machinery which will be available is still questionable. Farmers will be asked to: (1) Check over their old machinery, (2) order parts needed, and (3) notify county USDA Defense Boards if they cannot obtain parts.